

The Veto of the Reassessment Bill.

We published yesterday the message of Governor Walker vetoing the bill providing for a reassessment of the value of the lands in the various counties of the State which did not avail themselves of the act of last session allowing them that privilege. We need not say that we approve of the message. We have heretofore indicated what our views are upon the subject.

It was a great mistake to pass the law of last session. The passage of that act afforded a plausible pretext for the introduction of the bill which the Governor has just vetoed. That act originated a scramble for the front rank in the race for low assessments which was disgraceful. Officers were sworn to support the Constitution, which declares that all property shall be taxed at its real value, at the same time that they were confidently expected to violate that oath and assess the property at a lower rate in a county than in B county. This expectation may or may not have been fulfilled. We cannot say whether it was or not; but the consciences of men are proverbially elastic in the matter of assessment. The Governor wishes to put an end to this state of things. Before the vetoed bill could have been carried out in full, lands would have become absolutely worthless if the wishes of some landholders had been respected.

If it could be done, the General Assembly would do well to repeal the act of last session and restore the assessment previously existing. We do not expect this to be done, however. What we oppose this bill we would have every inequality in assessments that can possibly be reached corrected as soon as possible, if there is any constitutional mode of effecting this end; but we are not willing to see the Legislature of Virginia sailing too near the wind's eye on constitutional questions. Better suffer temporary wrongs than do this "evil thing."

Quid Pro Quo.

Congress abolished the franking privilege, and at once went to work to compensate itself for so much of self-denial. The result is seen in the law just passed giving to each member of Congress five thousand dollars of extra pay for his services during the last two years. Next winter the franking privilege will be restored to members of Congress, and they will continue also to pocket the increased pay which the new law authorizes. There is no language of denunciation too strong to be applied to such conduct. Save us from such a party as the war has put into power.

"The First Blood of the War."

The following interesting letter is from one who speaks whereof he knows, and whose word is as good as any man's bond—his own or anybody else's. We regret that he has furnished the use of his name in this connection. This letter clearly settles the question as to whose was the first blood of the war shed on Virginia soil. The Warrenton Index will please take notice that both parties were soldiers:

SALAM, ROANOKE COUNTY, VA.,

February 28, 1873.

Editors Dispatch:—An editorial in your issue of the 22d inst. headed "The First Blood of the War," is highly correct, but inaccurate in some of its details.

The man killed at Fetterman on the night of the 22d of May, 1861, was named Brown, a Union man, of Rockingham (Preston county), who had joined the company then forming at Grafton for Federal service, and afterwards commanded by Dan. Wilson. The Confederate who killed Brown was Daniel F. Knight, a private in Captain Robinson's company, Hanebrough's battalion, and not a member of the Thirty-first Virginia regiment. The circumstances of the killing were these: Wilson was drilling his company that night at Grafton, and after parade was over, Wilson and Brown got on a spree. Wilson's company had no arms, but were daily expecting them from Wheeling. Wilson proposed to Brown to go down to Fetterman and supply them with muskets from the rebels camped there; and away they went. When arrived at the camp-guard, Knight halted them. They demanded to know his authority to stop them on the public highway. Knight responded that his captain had ordered him to do so, and that he was without a permit, but added that as he knew (Captain) Wilson they might pass. Then Brown exclaimed, "Let's shoot the damned scoundrel, anyhow!" and, suiting action to word, fired a pistol at Knight. The ball passed through Knight's left ear, and he then discharged his musket at Brown, and emptied a heavy load of slugs into Brown's breast, killing him instantly. I was at Fetterman that night, but was awake and up, and heard the report of the musket. Next morning, on going to Fetterman, I saw Brown's body laid out. The Wheeling Intelligencer announced the death of Brown under the head of "The Death of the First Martyr to the Union." I had myself cut the slugs and loaded the musket a few nights before, when Captain W. P. T. then camped at Fetterman with the Edmonson company, became apprehensive of an attack from the Grafton Unionists, and sent up hurriedly for my company to march to his assistance.

How THEY VOTED.—In the House of Representatives, last Friday, on the proposition to increase the salaries of congressmen and others, Messrs. CRITCHER, DUBE, and PLATT voted "Aye." Messrs. BRAXTON and HARRIS voted "No." Messrs. FOSTER, STOWELL, and TERRY did not vote. STOWELL voted when the next vote was taken. We shall not revise our opinion as to the character of the bill voted for further than to say that those of these gentlemen who voted "Aye" do not look through our spectacles, or they would have thought it right to vote for such a bill. They worked hard to get the measure to accept of their services at a compensation of \$5,000 per annum. Surely they do not now claim to have been forced into the service.

The March No. of The Educational Journal of Virginia, organ of the Educational Association and of the Department of Public Instruction, has been received by us. Considering the limited number of patrons which such a journal probably has, and the size of the periodical itself, it is a model monthly. Like Goldsmith's parson, who was "passing rich on forty pounds a year," though worthy of a larger parish and a larger salary, the Educational Journal, though poorly supported, merits much patronage, and preaches as well as it has ten thousand pounds a year. It is in the highest degree creditable to the Educational Association that it should have been so well supported.

The Journal is mistaken, and hence bestows its praise on the wrong man. The Hon. James A. Bayard, of Delaware, is the only man who comes with brightened honor out of the Credit-Mobilier investigation. The Poland committee cite his letter respecting Credit-Mobilier stock as the model that all ought to have followed. General Hayler, in debate, said "he saluted the Cavalier Bayard."

We never had the pleasure of seeing Senator Bayard but once, and that was at the Baltimore Convention, in July last, where, in behalf of his noble little State, he entered his protest, in a speech evincing the greatest patriotism and statesmanship, against the proposed action of the Convention.—William (N. C.) Journal.

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Credit-Mobilier business, is not now a member of the United States Senate, although he was for many years. His son, the Hon. Thomas F. Bayard, is his successor; and it was Thomas F. Bayard who at the Baltimore Convention spoke against the proposed indorsement of the Cincinnati nomination.

Members of the New United States Senate.

In accordance with the President's proclamation, in the Senate of the United States on yesterday at Washington, Administration Democrats (in italics); 41; and Democrats and Liberals (in italics); 23; vacancies, 2. The figures indicate the year in which the senator's term expires, and an asterisk (*) denotes that he is a new member.

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